

December 5, 2017

Ms. Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90

Dear Ms. Dortch:

We are seven rural telecommunications carriers that elected the revised offer of Alternative Connect America Model (A-CAM) support in the State of Colorado. We urge the Federal Communications Commission (“Commission”) to take action before the end of this year to authorize additional A-CAM funding up to \$200/month per eligible customer location. Doing so would enable us to provide more rural consumers in Colorado with the broadband connectivity they need to participate in today’s economy.

This additional funding will result in significant progress in closing the digital divide in our State. Additional funding of \$200/month per location would result in a 13.4% increase in the number of rural consumers in Colorado having access to a minimum of 25/3 Mbps broadband service and a 19% increase in the number of Colorado rural consumers having access to service of at least 10/1 Mbps. The number of A-CAM funded locations that would remain on “reasonable request” in Colorado would decrease by 43% if funding were increased to this level – meaning that the carriers serving these customers would have a concrete obligation to deploy broadband to them.

Access to broadband is critical to economic growth and productivity in our rural areas. Further extending the reach of broadband through the A-CAM plan will enable more children in our communities to do their homework at home, allow our seniors to age in place, and result in healthcare savings for the chronically ill who can be remotely monitored at home. Additional funding of the A-CAM plan for some Pine Drive Telephone Company customers, for example, would mean the difference between provisioning broadband via fiber to the home vs. DSL.

There is no reason for the Commission to delay in allocating additional funding. The mechanism to distribute additional funds is already in place. The additional funding will be targeted to high-cost census blocks that are not served by unsubsidized competitors where, absent support, it is not economically feasible to extend broadband service. We are already upgrading network infrastructure in our communities and are eager to further extend the reach of those networks to additional customers. If we receive additional funding now, we will be able to design our network upgrades in the most efficient manner to better serve our communities.

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We urge the Commission to act by the end of this year to allocate additional funding to carry out its original decision to provide A-CAM funding for up to \$200/month per eligible location.

Sincerely,

The Colorado A-CAM Companies

Bijou Telephone Co-Op Association, Inc.
Delta County Tele-Comm, Inc.
Nucla-Naturita Telephone Company
Pine Drive Telephone Company
Rico Telephone Company
Strasburg Telephone Company
Haxtun Telephone Company

cc: Chairman Ajit Pai
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Michael O’Rielly
Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel
Commissioner Brendan Carr